1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

therefore the guiding hand in local affairs. But in Greece I found no such use of the secretary's role. He generally considered himself a servant of both the state and the local people. In this Attica village the secretary said: "I do all the difficult work. I am kept so busy that I even work at night. Recruiting for the army, for instance, is done through me. I was awakened at five this morning by a man who wanted a certificate. I am also head of post and telegraph here. This is an unusual job for a secretary but the local government couldn't afford such an official and asked me to take on the job. I reckon I must work eighty hours some weeks." But he seemed to be thriving on his job.

When I inquired more carefully into what the council does, I learned that, in addition to collecting the taxes, it has the problem of determining what families are poor enough to qualify for welfare assistance. The president and two other citizens comprise a committee on social welfare and classify families according to need. The two citizens had been selected by the Ministry of Welfare from a list of nine local people nominated by the president, and they serve two years. The poor people are officially listed according to categories A, B, and C, which are based on family income and size of family. The poorest (A category) will get free medical care, free hospitalization, free maternity service, and free drugs at the expense of the Ministry of Welfare. Those in category B are entitled to the same advantages, but have lower priority in the event sufficient facilities are not available to all. Those in C category must pay for their drugs, but at reduced prices, with the price difference being made up by the Ministry of Welfare. Of the 560 families in this village, one half were in one of the above categories. Since everybody in a village knows everyone else's business, there is much discussion of the fairness of the list. A person in need comes personally to ask for help, but he may be removed from the list at the end of three months when the names must be reviewed.

Around Volos, in the villages on Mount Pelion, I found emergency welfare needs handled on a much less bureaucratic basis. The commandant of gendarmerie for the Volos area learned in March 1953 that many families in the villages on the eastern part of Pelion lacked food. Unlike those in the Attica village, these people had made no complaints. They ordinarily live on returns from olives, apples, chestnuts, and some potatoes, but storms had destroyed their chestnut and apple crop to the extent that they had received little income the previous autumn. By March, they were without funds to buy bread. Part of their poverty could also be traced to the number of times their villages had been pillaged by the guerrilla bands which had earlier operated in that area. Their clothes were a pattern of patches. They kept little livestock because pastures were lacking and because any lambs produced did not mature early enough to be sold at Easter.

The commandant, in view of these circumstances, asked help from the

1:Sanders Z-5 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

representative of the International Red Cross, who arranged with the organizational officials in Athens for an immediate distribution of rice, sugar, and molasses (for children). Momentarily, the representative also secured money for bread, telephoning from Athens to the commandant to buy the bread locally. The Red Cross representative had expected the commandant to buy about eight hundred one-oka loaves of bread, but he had different ideas: "Why not give the people flour and cut down the expense of the salt, water, and manipulation that goes into the baked bread?" So he bought nine hundred and eighty okas of flour and persuaded the flour mills at Volos to contribute another two tons. He also handled the problem of transportation with originality. Since these eight villages are remote, the trucking costs to them are high. The commandant, suggesting that the distribution be at four points, appealed to the local transportation cooperatives to supply the trucks after the Union of Trucks had voted to help. Then the drivers agreed to donate a day's free labor, with the "day" totaling sixteen hours for many of them before the distribution was completed and the trucks were safely back in Volos.

But the role of the village notables should not be minimized. Although the commandant had made a trip through the district to look personally into the condition of many families, he depended upon the president, the priest, the teacher, and the gendarme to prepare the list of the needy in each village. The role of the president came to the fore at the distribution points, to which he brought some men and pack animals. The commandant explained in great detail to each president the basis on which the distribution was being made, who had made the contributions, and what families were to receive how much. The supplies for each village, when weighed out from the trucks, were turned over to the community president. He then supervised the loading of the pack animals and headed the animal train back toward his village. Once arrived, he was to see that the distribution was carried out according to instructions.

Such an experience leaves many impressions: the deep personal interest which the commandant of gendarmerie showed in the welfare of the people in his area; the dignity of the village presidents who asked very intelligent questions to be sure that they properly understood the instructions about distribution; the tattered clothing worn by these quiet, almost impassive villagers. And here, as always in Greece, one sensed deeply the beauty of the natural surroundings: the mountains where patches of snow still lingered, the dark glades through which the road sometimes wound, the occasional olive groves and chestnut forests, with lively pedestrian traffic ready to greet one every few hundred yards. Down on the plain, on a sunny afternoon, the meadows were full of a profusion of wild flowers so delicate in color and stamina that they die soon after they are plucked or after the hot sun of late April and May beats down on the unprotected plain. On

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

our way back to Athens the next day as evening began to fall, we saw Mount Parnassus, snow-topped, off to the west, and knew that beyond it lay Delphi and its sacred shrine. In an ancient land, peasants of today were still wrestling with the problem of hunger; and generous people — Greek officials, millers, truck owners and truck drivers, and supporters of the International Red Cross — were expressing a common humanity. Village presidents, or local government in action, were the final link between the outside world and those in need.

Other trips, however, left one in a different mood. In the Peloponnesos, as in many parts of Greece, I found villagers who did not feel very kindly toward their community president, even though they had elected him. In one place a peasant, not without a trace of prejudice, remarked: "My brother-in-law was president of the council when the village road was built. He and the council decided how many days men of the family had to contribute and we got the job done. But our president now is a poor type of political leader. He plays favorites. He does not promise anything for the village as a whole; he has no concern for a much-needed bridge at the place where your car almost got stuck crossing the stream."

In another village, an old man who had spent five years as a young man in the United States complained: "In community affairs we have to elect a president who is 'in keeping' with the government in power, or else we get left out. But many of our village presidents take revenge on those villagers who disagree with them. In the States, if you are a Democrat nobody cares." When I asked in what ways the president could take revenge, he said that the president could make unfair work assignments to a community voluntary-labor project, make unequal distribution of welfare goods, and create difficulties for a man trying to get a loan through the cooperative.

But in many ways the community council has some control over the president because it can outvote him on crucial issues. In fact, a council will frequently have real discussions since each member feels well informed on village matters, which is all they are supposed to discuss, and can reflect the ideas of his friends, followers, or his coffeehouse clique. As one Greek official said, "The community council is a lively element in village life. The only point to remember is that council members are not educated enough to measure up to their tasks."

Some brief insight into how this process works is found in the case of Stavroupolis, a village whose coffeehouses were treated at some length in the preceding chapter. According to John Photiadis:

> Stavroupolis and the three other villages which form the Stavroupolis community are incorporated, with their government located in Stavroupolis. This government consists of an unpaid nine-member council elected by vote every four years, and a salaried mayor. For specific projects and activities, special committees are appointed from the council members and sometimes non-coun-

freedom to defy Hitler, in the sure knowledge that their country would be overrun and occupied if they did so. During the occupation, they remained free; little children risked their lives to do absolutely unnecessary things such as defacing Nazi posters, giving expression to their essential freedom. The morale of the people was upheld by their knowledge that they had not forfeited their freedom, and that they had been defeated only technically, not man-to-man, but by monstrous machines. External coercion without internal submission has no bearing on the maintenance of the *philotimo*.

To suggest to a Greek that he needs aid in raising his standard of living because his ways are backward is to violate his *philotimo* as a person and as a Greek. There is need for aid now because of acts of God, not because of personal failure or Greek inadequacy. Until the government centralized aid in the Department of Welfare, and to some extent thereafter, Greek families and communities took care of their own indigents or dependents. The Greeks who emigrated to the United States before the change and formed conservative communities in their new country continued to take care of their own unemployed and orphaned; they were adapting the village pattern; besides, their *philotimo* would not allow them to expose to outsiders their failure and inadequacy. However, Greeks will accept aid when it is their right within a structured relationship; they will accept it as their share from the nation for which they have fought, or from the nation which they have helped in its war against the forces of evil; and Greeks stand firm in the knowledge that they were vital in bringing about the defeat of the Nazis by delaying Hitler's plans. They will also accept help without losing their *philotimo* when the need comes through an act of God. Their ways of making a living are adequate under normal circumstances; but now, because of destruction, occupation, soil erosion, loss of the right to emigrate, they need technical assistance to achieve a standard of living which is their right as Greeks and as persons. They can accept help also because the need is common to all the Greeks. During the war they said, not "See what I have come to," but "See what the nation has come to!" and then their situation was bearable. The office which is in charge of the ECA activities now reminds the people of the different villages that the destruction has been nationwide, that the need applies to all the Greeks, and so makes it bearable, and saves their *philotimo*. More than this, the government now appeals for self-participation in rebuilding the homes and the villages in the name of their *philotimo* as Greeks; to exert themselves as their sons exerted themselves in war, "to show the world what the Greeks can do in peace as well as in war".

much below that of the provinces, even at a time when the villages were suffering from the depravations of the civil war.

Lent does not affect nutrition significantly. Where olive-oil is not allowed, olives are; where fish is not allowed, fish roe is. In the provinces, not much meat is eaten, even before Lent; in the cities many of the people fast only on a few of the important days of Lent. However, now that mothers have been taught the importance of giving their children daily milk, Lent does have an effect in this area; milk is forbidden during Lent, and children have to fast at least during the latter part. Unicef has made successful efforts to persuade mothers to give their children milk during this period. It achieved this with the co-operation of bishops who drank milk during Lent to show mothers that, if the cause was good, it was not a sin to drink milk; only one archimandrite refused to do so, afraid to take on the responsibility of possibly leading the people astray.

Greek holidays each have their appropriate food. It is essential for the welfare, the religion, for the Greekness of the people, to have this food at that time. At a time when the Bureau of Welfare was set up to function only during emergency, it offered funds for the indigent at holidays for the purchase of the indispensable festive foods. If Greeks have any money to spend at such a time, these foods have a priority over everything else.

ATTITUDES UNDERLYING ACCEPTANCE OF CHANGE

Greeks do not place a value on unlimited progress; what they want is the better than the present, or than the known. Modern Greek has lost the superlative of ancient Greek. To express *the best*, one now says, *the better of all the others*. And this expresses what is actually wanted. The American says, "the sky's the limit", but the Greek wants to reach the ceiling instead, something that he can touch and know ahead of time. The rest is a dream; he speculates about it as he speculates about what he would do if he were President of the United States; and he uses the subjunctive, not the future.

In this way, the attitude toward change is related to the place of the plan in Greek life. On the one hand, that which is a plan to an American, organizing and inciting to action, is a dream to the Greek, leading to quiescence or to oratory. The Greek mother of an American adolescent is shocked to hear her daughter express as plans, in the future tense, what she herself expressed in the subjunctive of the dream. Plans introducing agricultural and other change are formulated by foreign or foreign-trained technicians who say: "When I get to be . . . I shall do . . ." for people who say: "If I were . . . I would do"; there is a chasm between these two views of life.

On the other hand, the plan based on the non-experienced, on